

Halo: Traveller

by Nedy Rahn

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Summary: In 2525 the planet Circninus-IV home of the Corbulo Academy of Military Sciences is attacked by the Covenant, but a fortuitous misjump by the remnants of the Terran Confederation Navy's Fifth Assault Group turns the tide however brief it is.

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By

Denise Lynn Hemmingway

Corbulo Academy of Military Sciences Circninus-IV CE 2525

Freshman Cadets Thomas Laskey and Michael Sullivan, and Senior Cadet April Orenski are the sole survivors of the attack by an alien force upon the UNSC colony of Circninus-IV and the Corbulo Academy of Military Sciences. For the last several hours they've been evading hunter-killer teams led by a man in advanced combat armor who only calls himself Master Chief. They've used the last of their live ammunition just to get to this point. So far they've killed two gigantic armored creatures. Along with several smaller beings who resembled a cross between birds and small lizards.

The four of them reached the clearing where two more heavily armored soldiers were protecting a Pelican-Class drop ship. The trouble was that the skies overhead were full of alien fighter type ships and the drop ship was pinned down where it was. Before anyone could get aboard the shuttle a plasma bolt struck it, penetrating its armor and igniting one of its fuel pods. The Pelican burst into a small mushroom cloud while the cadets and the Master Chief were still 100 meters for the clearing. The other two soldiers just barely got out of the area as the fireball consumed the landing zone.

The Master Chief stopped the cadets short enough to prevent them from being burned alive by the expanding ball of burning fuel. The two other Spartans ran up to him just meters ahead of the edge of the now dissipating fireball. Laskey amazed by the survival of the other two heavily armored soldiers suddenly yelled asking, "Hey Master Chief, just who in God's name are you three?"

The armored soldier who called himself Master Chief with the number 117 stenciled on the left breast of his armor simply said in an electronically enhanced voice, "Spartans." Then he had the other two help him establish a triangular perimeter around the three cadets as he stared up to the skies above.

Ushmi, Shululsish Subsector CE 2245

The TCS Resolute, an Indomitable-Class Battleship was providing orbital fire support for the planetary assault of the Vilani world of Ushmi when the Fifth Assault Group was surprised by a counter attack from the Vilani Imperial Navy. The Resolute, the Assault Carrier Normandy, the destroyers Ashton and Carlisle made an emergency blind jump from the systems using data transmitted by the Resolute. The four ships were the sole survivors of the Terran Confederation Navy's Fifth Assault Group which consisted of four Indomitable-Class Battleships, four Tarawa-Class Assault Carriers, ten Zumwalt-Class Destroyers, six Paris-Class Cruisers, four RAINIER-Class Fast Combat Support Ships, SAFEGUARD-Class Rescue and Salvage Ships and two Clara Barton-Class Hospital Ships.

When they came out of jump Rear Admiral Lower Half Jonas Tremble, Deputy Commander of the Fifth Assault Group stood at the main holographic tactical display table in the ship's Command Bridge deep within the Resolute. "Status?" He yelled out into the smoke filled compartment where electrical fires were just being extinguished and several crewmen and officers were getting a handle of just what damage was done, where they were and the current tactical situation.

Commander Dianna Charleston looked up from the tablet computer where she was getting the reports from Damage Control parties all over the ship and replied, "The ship is sound. No compartments are open to space. We have minor electrical fires in various departments from the Command Bridge to Engineering, but they're being brought under control. Engineering reports we burned through all our jump fuel on that last jump. Navigation is having difficulty getting a fix on our exact location in known space. Similar reports are coming in from the Assault Carrier Normandy and the Destroyers Ashton and Carlisle. We seem to be the only survivors of the Fifth Assault Group sir. Navigation reports we're over an Earthlike planet sir. Tactical is reporting that said planet seems to be under some sort of orbital bombardment and possible planetary assault. Communications is receiving repeated distress calls both from orbit and the surface. It seems some sort of alien force is attacking the local human colony." Then CDR Charleston took a breath and looked up with a surprised look on her face and continued her report, "Sir said colony says they're the Earth Colony Circinus-IV. We're also receiving reports that the Corbulo Academy of Military Sciences is under attack." Then suddenly her report stops. She is in voice communications with the Communications Division. Then she looks back up at RDML Tremble, "Sir all communications with the parties on the surface have ceased as

have communications with Earth forces in orbit. The attacking force seems to be alien in nature and using high energy plasma weapons according to Tactical and Sensors. Tactical also reports we are within range of our primary weapon from a Dreadnaught sized capital ship."

"Have Tactical put the feed on the display," RDML Tremble said pointing to the HTDT. In a few second the image of the planet came up into the holotank. A ship nearly three times the size of the Resolute came into view as was bracketed with the red targeting indicators showing that it was well within range of the spinally mounted heavy meson cannon. The Resolute's main weapon was fully charged and ready to fire. "Fire the meson cannon, we may not be able to save anyone on this world, but we sure as hell can avenge them. No one attacks an Earth colony and gets away with it. Not the Vilani and sure as hell not some unknown alien race attacking out of the dark of space in surprise!" Tremble shouted letting his feelings be heard throughout the Command Bridge.

The lights dimmed a bit on the Command Bridge and throughout the ship a high pitched whine could be heard as the ship's primary battery fired its first shot in the Battle of Circninus-IV. A beam of subatomic particles even smaller than those projected by a particle accelerator cannon streamed at near light speeds from the muzzle of the meson cannon. The shields of the alien craft sparkled a bit, but nothing was stopped as they weren't designed to stop this kind of energy weapon. The beam even passed through the armor of the Dreadnaught's hull.

Inside life became a living nightmare for the races of the Covenant who made up the crew of the Divine Justice. From the highest elite to the lowest grunt every living thing alive on the Justice cooked as if they were fresh food in a microwave oven. Ammunition magazines, and fuel bunkers exploded, computers and other electronics on the ship behaved as if they had received an EMP blast heavier than they were shielded for. Life both organic and machine ceased within the few seconds that the meson beam passed through the ship. The shields faded just as fusion bolts from the Resolute's secondary batteries impacted on the Justice's hull burning massive gashes through the armored belt and incinerating the atmosphere within. Anyone who by chance may have survived being cooked alive by the meson beam was roasted by the plasma fires ignited within the atmosphere of the ship before it was vented into space.

This was not the last of the torment the dying Covenant Dreadnaught was to suffer. As the last of the fusion bolts finished their deadly business the coup-de-grace imploded within the hull of the now thoroughly dead ship. A thermonuclear anti-ship warhead went off temporarily creating a new star over the dead planet of Circninus-IV. The other ships of the Covenant attack force soon responded, but they were a bit late as similar attacks were coming from the two destroyers and the battleship.

In a matter of a mere half an hour the ten ships of the Covenant assault force were wrecks and the fighters from the Assault Carrier and the Battleship were mopping of any surviving fighters in space as were the laser and fusion cannons of the Destroyers and the Resolute. On the surface six surviving humans looked up at the deadly orbital fireworks display as a drop ship landed near them of a design they've never seen before, but which was obviously of human design. The first

ship was followed by two more. Each of those disgorged two full platoons of fully armored Marines.

A human in full body armor with a thin reflective face plate walked up to the Master Chief and the other five survivors of the surface battle of Circninus-IV. She stopped and said, "I am Major Julia Downing of the 142nd Marine Lift Infantry Regiment of the Terran Confederation Marine Corps; are you the Master Chief? If so; I'm your ride of this rock!"

End  
file.